



January 6, 2010

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket 09-191

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

The Tri-Cities region is comprised of the cities of Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, West Richland, and other surrounding towns. The region enjoys over 300 days of sunshine a year and offers visitors and residents a year-round outdoor paradise. The confluence of the Snake, Yakima and Columbia rivers has produced an aquatic playground that is second to none. The area's inviting waterways beckon water lovers from all over the region to enjoy sailing, power and pleasure boating, waterskiing, swimming, fishing, windsurfing, and much more.

The area is also known for its advances in science and technology, which have carried over to excellent educational opportunities in each of our local school districts, as well as opportunities in higher education.

Despite these advantages, and numerous other aspects of life in the Tri-Cities, we are often literally left off the map. People looking at a U.S. map will see Walla Walla but not the Tri-Cities, even though we are the fourth largest community in the state. One of the Chamber's primary goals is to establish an identity for our region to help in attracting venture capital, companies and professionals to our region.

That's the concern I have with the FCC's proposal to impose Network Neutrality regulations on today's cutting edge Internet-based services. Our future economic health is directly tied to continued investment in the critical communications infrastructure that has transformed our society. Regulation tends to limit investment, increase the cost of investing, and, potentially, drive businesses out of business. When you're the fourth largest and often overlooked community in a state, you worry about being left out of the next investment in new technologies. While the services and technologies we have today are driving our economy, it will be much harder to attract skilled labor and business capital to the region if we have to rely on today's technology years later, when other communities have been upgraded and we have not.

I hope the FCC will take the time to fully explore any potential harm these regulations could have on investment, especially in areas which may be the first to suffer the consequences of reduced investment. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal and for your interest in hearing from the business community around the Nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin Hastings".

Colin Hastings
Public Policy Director